

Standing Building Survey
Former Steading, Nether Craighill,
Aberdeenshire Council



Former steading, Nether Craighill from the west



13th May 2014

Introduction

The planning consent for this development, Aberdeenshire Council Planning Application APP/2014/0258 dated 24th February 2014, included a planning condition that required a Level 1 standing building survey of the standing remains of the former steading at Nether Craighill prior to their demolition for redevelopment. This standing building survey was carried out by the author on Monday 12th May 2014 (Site Code CHILL01); weather conditions were bright and damp.

Location (Illus 1)

The former stables at Nether Craighill lie to the N of the still occupied house of the same name, the village of Arbuthnott lies 2 km to the SW.

Historical Background (Illus 2)

From limited research the earliest reference found to Nether Craighill is on 15th November 1797 where Robert Hadden is listed as owning 1 horse valued at £0.2.3 (Farm Horse Tax Rolls 1797-1798 Volume 10). The steading is marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 which shows a group of three buildings around an open courtyard area to the S and the layout is mapped that way until we get to the maps of the 1950's where the steading is shown as a large single building, very much as it survives today.

Building Survey (Illus 3 and 4)

The surviving large standing steading building is actually an amalgamation of two earlier stone buildings and a stone wall that have been re-roofed to form a large enclosed space. For this survey the building as it currently exists will be described and then the earlier elements will be discussed.

Western Elevation (Illus 5 to 9 and 27)

This elevation has shaped sandstone quoins at its corners and its wall is built of a mixture of small flat sandstone slabs and courses of rough slightly worked boulders (both granite and schist). All of the stonework is bonded with lime mortar. There is a large doorway at its eastern end which has the remains of a sliding wooden door; there are two smaller doorways in the middle of this elevation both of which have arched lintels built of individual shaped stone blocks. One of these doorways has been blocked with concrete breeze blocks. There are three small windows just below the roof line each measuring 0.40m by 0.60m, the window closest to the southern end of this elevation has been blocked with bricks). The roof is built of corrugated sheeting.

Northern Elevation (Illus 11, 12 and 27)

The western end of this elevation is the gable end of Structure 1 and comprises courses of shaped stones bonded with lime mortar. There is a single narrow window in this elevation, the top of the gable has been rebuilt in brick and contains a blocked window. The remainder of this gable until it reaches structure 2 is built of concrete blocks on top of a wall of shaped stones, the top of a entrance blocked with bricks is visible at the point where the stone wall meets the eastern wall of

structure 1. Two gables have been built with concrete blocks on either side of an entrance into the steading complex and roofed with corrugated sheets. The eastern end of this elevation comprises a fragment of coursed stone wall which supports a lean to tin roof.

Eastern Elevation (Illus 13, 14 and 28)

This elevation has a course mortar bonded stone wall with a single doorway at its southern end and a fragment of standing stone wall at its eastern end. The remainder of this elevation is now open fronted and the entire length supports a corrugated iron lean to roof.

Southern Elevation (Illus 15, 16 and 28)

This elevation has four gable ends; three of these are built of concrete blocks with large sliding wooden doors the fourth is the southern gable of the stone building (Structure 2). That gable is built of shaped mortar bonded stone blocks with a single window and a doorway with a sliding door. A stone built ramp provides access to a narrower doorway that leads on to an elevated walkway inside the steading.

Interior of Steading (Structure 3) (Illus 17 and 18)

This is divided by an elevated walkway running across the whole building which has an iron fence on its eastern side and is open on its western side. Iron columns support the roof along its length. Either side of the walkway are large open areas with concrete floors. Its internal western and eastern elevations comprise the former walls of Structures 1 and 2. Its internal northern elevation is formed by a coursed rough stone wall which has concrete blocks on top.

Interior of Structure 1 (Illus 19 to 21)

The southern end of this structure has been converted into a storage area, and its internal eastern elevation contains a blocked doorway with blocked windows on either side and a bricked up smaller window above the doorway. The internal western elevation is blank but does have a small bricked up window just below the roof line. The internal northern elevation is blank. The remainder of Structure 1 has been formerly used as an animal shed and has a concrete floor.

Internal western elevation of Structure 1 (Illus 22 and 29)

This elevation has three small blocked windows at roof height and a blocked doorway with blocked windows on either side. There is a single oval iron plate set into the wall which looks like part of a former bracer for this wall. There is a large doorway at its northern end.

Interior of Structure 2 (Illus 23 to 26 and 29)

The southern end of this structure was last used as an animal byre and has three concrete stalls. The next room to the north has doorways in its western and eastern elevations and an internal cobbled floor. The floor includes a defined cobbled walkway between the doors. A doorway in the northern wall leads to the remainder of this structure which is now open and has been used as an animal shed; there are badly damaged traces of cobbling in this part of the structure.

Sequence of buildings

Part of the building layout as visible on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1858 can still be defined in the amalgamated steading complex although elements of the earlier structures have either been blocked or partially demolished. What can no longer be identified is the long building that would have formed the northern side of the original steading complex although the surviving stone built wall running along the northern side may represent a remnant of that structure. Structures 1 and 2 have eventually been reroofed and amalgamated (with Structure 3) to form a substantial roofed steading complex.

Recommendations

The author feels that the photographic survey, elevation drawings and written notes on the building are an adequate record of the former steading complex at Nether Craighill prior to its demolition and there would seem to be no need for any further work. However the final decision on that rests with Aberdeenshire Council's archaeological service.

References

Scotland's Places - Farm Horse Tax Rolls 1797-1798 Volume 10
(<http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/farm-horse-tax-rolls-1797-1798/farm-horse-tax-1797-1798-volume-10/4#>)

Illustration List

Illustration 1 Location of former steading, Nether Craighill (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2013. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illustration 2 Original group of buildings at Nether Craighill (red arrow) as shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 (©Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 3 Location of numbered Structures 1, 2 and 3 (based on supplied architect's survey)

Illustration 4 Steading complex looking north Structure 1 to left, Structure 2 to right, Structure 3 in middle.

Illustration 5 West facing elevation of Structure 1 looking NE

Illustration 6 Detail of stonework in West facing elevation of Structure 2, bottom of blocked window just visible at top of shot

Illustration 7 Detail of West facing elevation showing arched doorways and small windows at roof line looking East

Illustration 8 Blocked arched entrance in West facing elevation of Structure 1

Illustration 9 Detail of large entrance door at N end of West facing elevation of Structure 1

Illustration 10 North facing elevation looking SE Structure 1 to right

Illustration 11 Detail of Western end of North facing elevation showing blocked window and doorway

Illustration 12 North facing elevation looking SW

Illustration 13 East facing elevation looking SW

Illustration 14 Southern end of East facing elevation showing Structure 2 in foreground

Illustration 15 South facing elevation looking N

Illustration 16 Internal elevated walkway in Structure 3 looking north

Illustration 17 Interior of Structure 3 from walkway looking South West, Eastern wall of Structure 1 in background

Illustration 18 Interior of Structure 3 from walkway looking East, Western wall of Structure 2 to right

Illustration 19 View of interior of Southern end of Structure 1 showing blocked doorway and windows (red arrows) in Eastern wall

Illustration 20 Interior of southern end of Structure 1 showing blocked window at roof line (red arrow)

Illustration 21 Interior of Structure 1 looking north

Illustration 22 Western elevation of Structure 1 (now inside amalgamated structure) showing blocked windows and doorway (red arrows)

Illustration 23 Interior of southern end of Structure 2

Illustration 24 Cobbled floor inside Structure 2 showing defined walkway to doorway

Illustration 25 Interior of northern end of Structure 2 looking north

Illustration 26 Eastern elevation of Structure 2 (now inside amalgamated structure) showing doorway beside scale

Illustration 27 West facing and North facing elevations (based on supplied survey drawings)

Illustration 28 East and South facing elevations (based on supplied survey drawings)

Illustration 29 Eastern and Western elevations of Structures 1 and 2 (now part of amalgamated structure) (based on authors survey)

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Former Steading, Nether Craighill, Arbuthnott
PROJECT CODE:	CHILL01
PARISH:	Arbuthnott
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Standing Building Record
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Former Steading
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 80716 77460
START DATE	12 th May 2014
END DATE	12 th May 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A level 1 survey was carried out of the former steading at Nether Craighill prior to its demolition in advance of redevelopment.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr J Bigland
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk

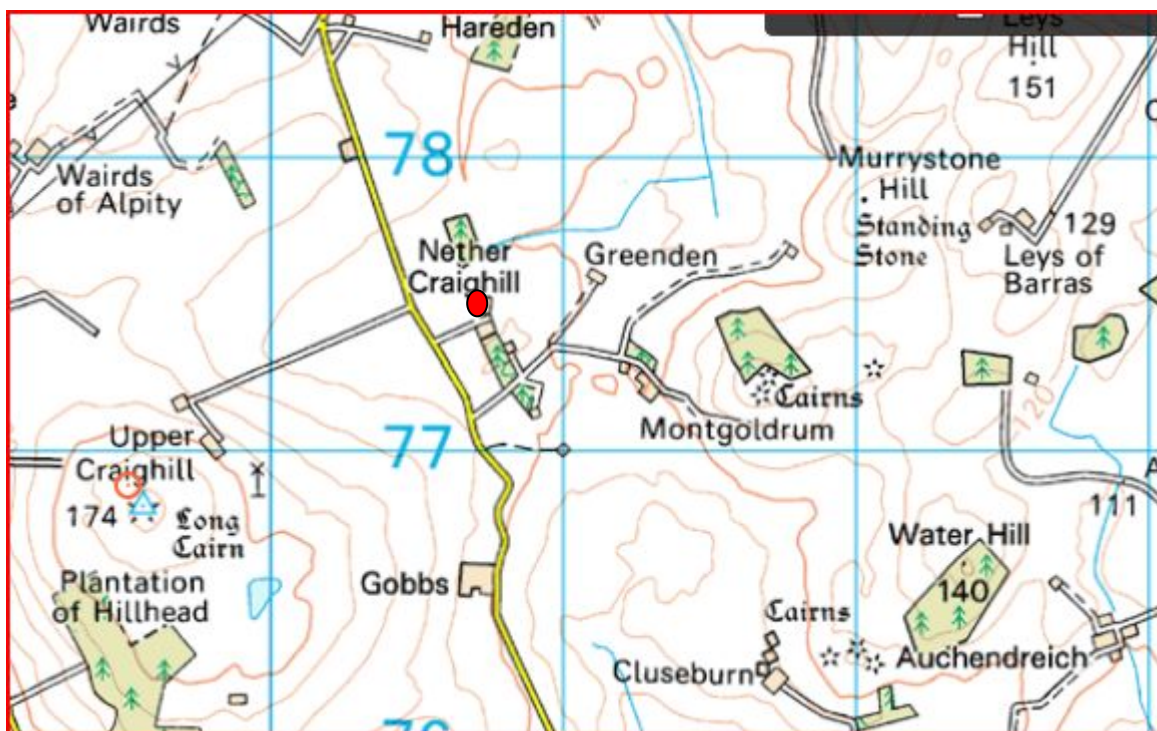


Illustration 1 Location of former steading, Nether Craighill (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2013. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)



Illustration 2 Original group of buildings at Nether Craighill (red arrow) as shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 (©Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

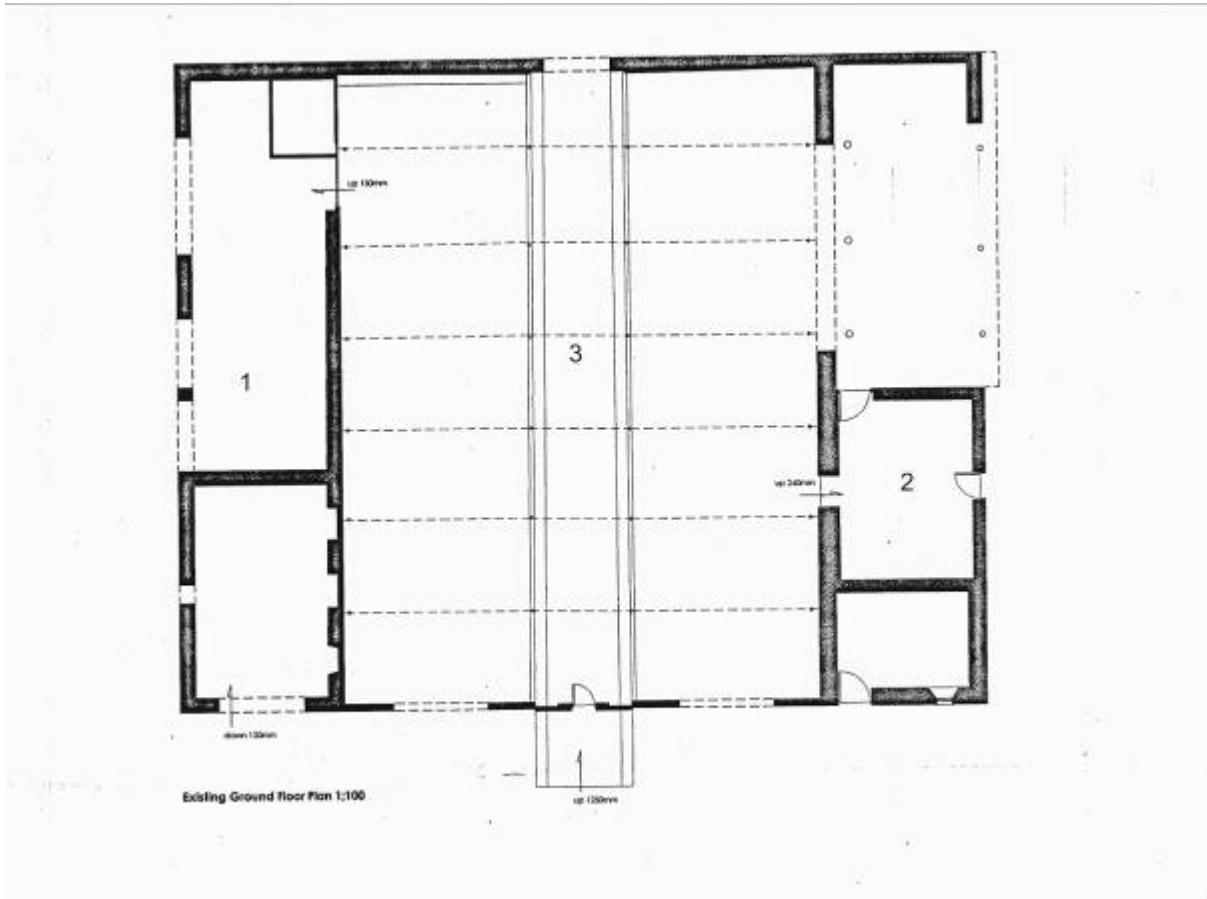


Illustration 3 Location of numbered Structures 1, 2 and 3 (based on supplied architect's survey)



Illustration 4 Steading complex looking north Structure 1 to left, Structure 2 to right, Structure 3 in middle.



Illustration 5 West facing elevation of Structure 1 looking NE

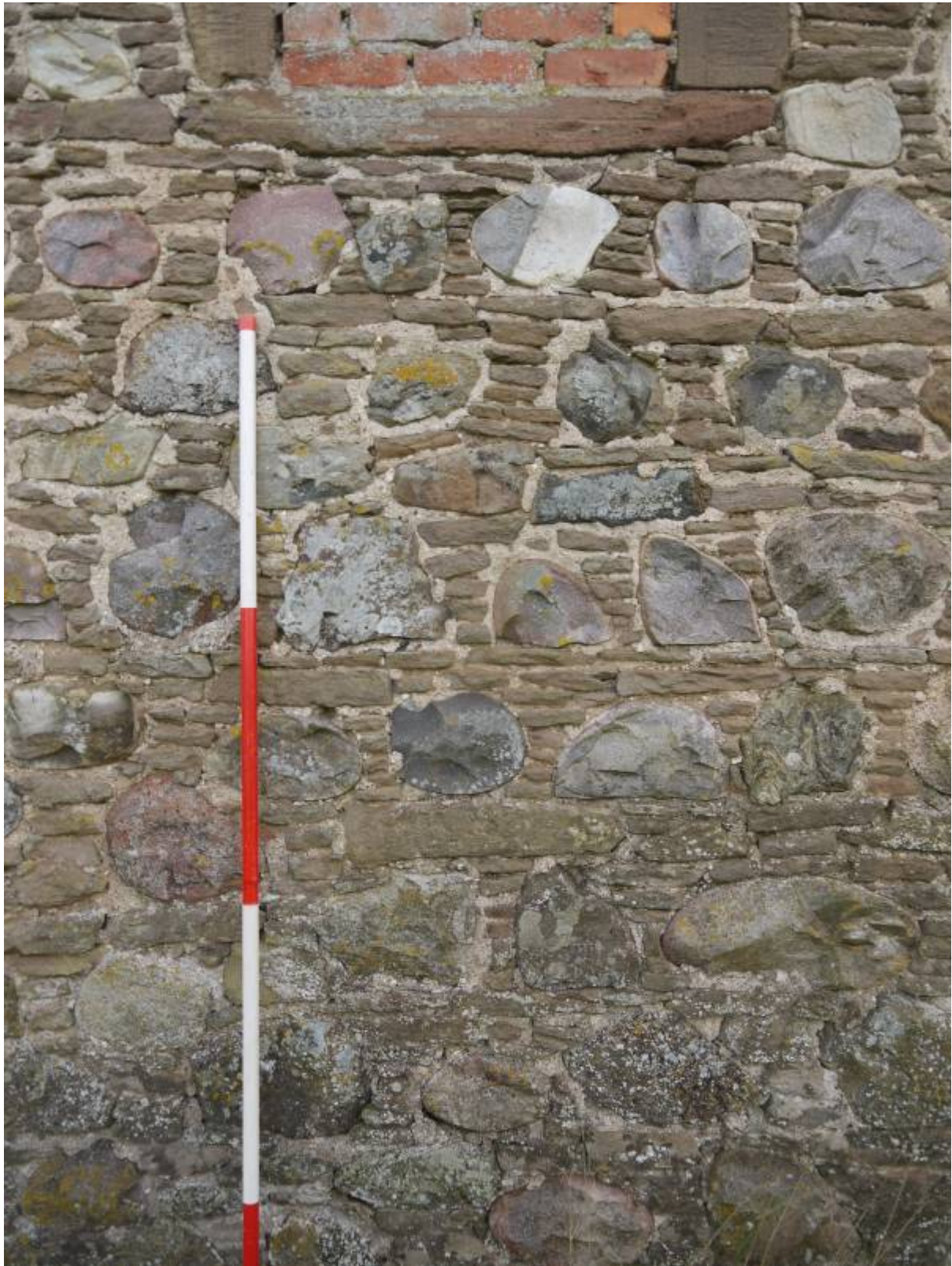


Illustration 6 Detail of stonework in West facing elevation of Structure 2, bottom of blocked window just visible at top of shot



Illustration 7 Detail of West facing elevation showing arched doorways and small windows at roof line looking East



Illustration 8 Blocked arched entrance in West facing elevation of Structure 1



Illustration 9 Detail of large entrance door at N end of West facing elevation of Structure 1



Illustration 10 North facing elevation looking SE Structure 1 to right



Illustration 11 Detail of Western end of North facing elevation showing blocked window and doorway



Illustration 12 North facing elevation looking SW



Illustration 13 East facing elevation looking SW



Illustration 14 Southern end of East facing elevation showing Structure 2 in foreground



Illustration 15 South facing elevation looking N



Illustration 16 Internal elevated walkway in Structure 3 looking north



Illustration 17 Interior of Structure 3 from walkway looking South West, Eastern wall of Structure 1 in background



Illustration 18 Interior of Structure 3 from walkway looking East, Western wall of Structure 2 to right



Illustration 19 View of interior of Southern end of Structure 1 showing blocked doorway and windows (red arrows) in Eastern wall



Illustration 20 Interior of southern end of Structure 1 showing blocked window at roof line (red arrow)



Illustration 21 Interior of Structure 1 looking north



Illustration 22 Western elevation of Structure 1 (now inside amalgamated structure) showing blocked windows and doorway (red arrows)



Illustration 23 Interior of southern end of Structure 2



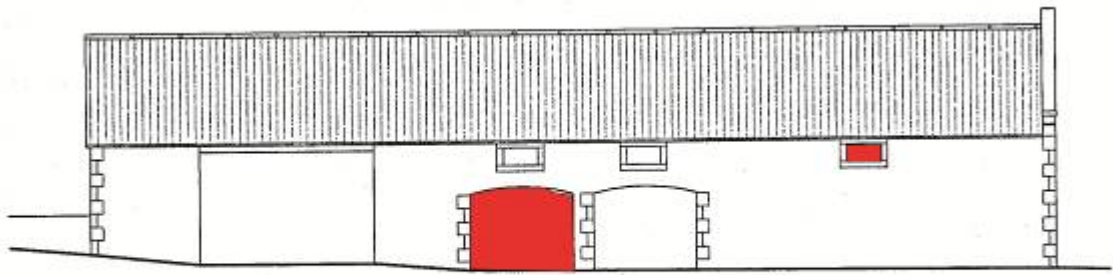
Illustration 24 Cobbled floor inside Structure 2 showing defined walkway to doorway



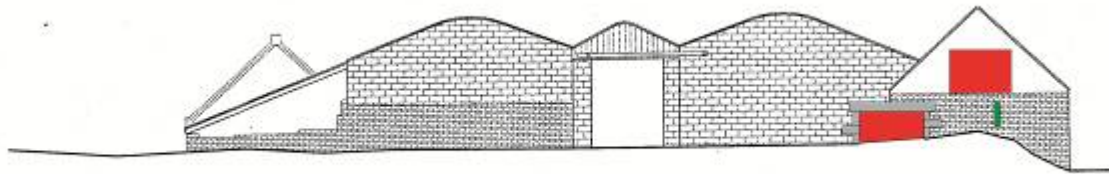
Illustration 25 Interior of northern end of Structure 2 looking north



Illustration 26 Eastern elevation of Structure 2 (now inside amalgamated structure) showing doorway beside scale

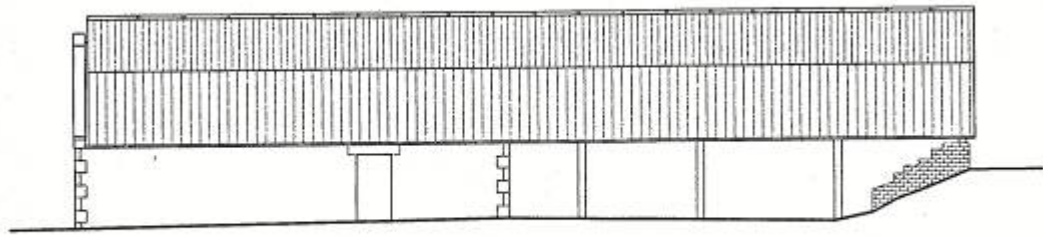


West facing elevation Structure 1 showing blocked doorway and window in red (based on supplied survey drawing) Scale 1:50

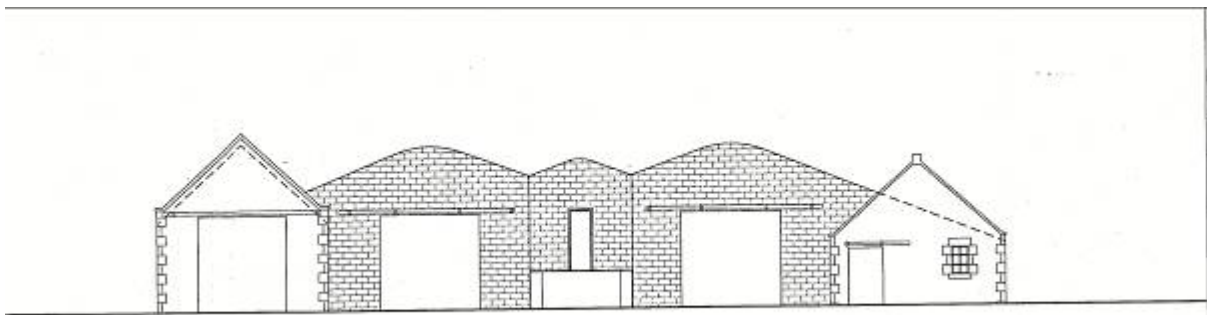


North facing elevation showing blocked doorway and window in Structure 1 in red and narrow window in green (based on supplied survey drawing) Scale 1:200

Illustration 27 West facing and North facing elevations (based on supplied survey drawings)

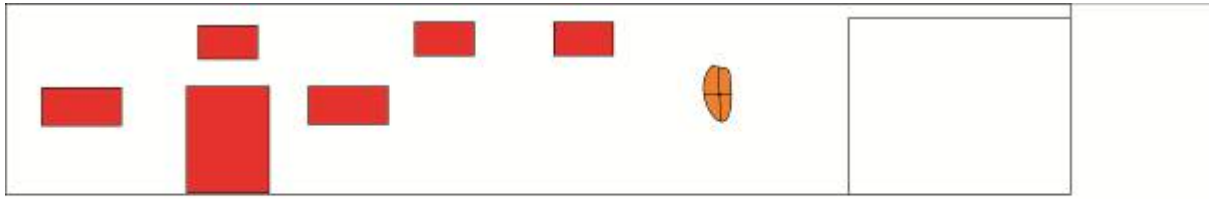


East facing elevation showing Structure 2 to left Scale 1:200



South facing elevation showing gable ends of Structures 1 and 2 to left and right and ramp in middle Scale 1:200

Illustration 28 East and South facing elevations (based on supplied survey drawings)



East facing elevation of Structure 1 (now part of amalgamated structure) showing blocked doorway and windows in red and oval iron plate in brown Scale 1:200



West facing elevation of Structure 2 (now part of amalgamated structure) showing elevated doorway Scale 1:200

Illustration 29 Eastern and Western elevations of Structures 1 and 2 (now part of amalgamated structure) (based on authors survey)